

too long has suffered economic distress and seen indifference from Washington. He united Kentucky's Appalachian counties around the Shaping our Appalachian Region, or SOAR, initiative to create a concerted effort to attract jobs and development to the region.

He revolutionized Southeastern Kentucky's water infrastructure, bringing new water treatment centers to our State and championing flood protection measures.

He wrangled Federal funding for the Cumberland Gap Tunnel in Bell County, which he described as "the most significant thing that has happened there since Daniel Boone began to bring settlers through the gap."

He helped bring the fine arts to Southeastern Kentucky through the Mountain Arts Center in Prestonsburg.

Locals are so appreciative of HAL's many projects that they dubbed the state-of-the-art Center for Rural Development in Somerset, one of his capstone initiatives, as the "Taj Ma-Hal" in his honor.

And that is not the only place in HAL's district that commemorates his service. If you visit Southeastern Kentucky, you will drive along the gorgeous Hal Rogers Parkway, study groundbreaking technical advances at the Hal Rogers Advanced Technology Center, and learn important career skills as part of the Hal Rogers Scholars Program.

Whitley County residents were so thankful for HAL's work that they even named the home of their new Kentucky Splash Water Park, the Hal Rogers Family Entertainment Center.

In Congress, we are just as fond of HAL ROGERS as his constituents are back at home. I have been proud to work alongside this premier legislator for nearly four decades. We share the same priorities for the people of Kentucky and the same vision for our State's great future.

HAL would not be the man he is today without the love and support of his late wife Shirley and their children, Anthony, Allison, and John. Later in life, HAL met and married Cynthia, a Tennessean who has also come to love Kentucky and its people.

So as HAL breaks the record as the longest serving U.S. Representative in Kentucky history, let us all give thanks to this great public servant and the entire Rogers family.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. FISCHER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRECISION AGRICULTURE

Mrs. FISCHER. Madam President, I have heard so many inspiring stories about how small businesses across the country adapted to COVID-19 and refused to give up, even when the odds seemed overwhelming.

Mac's Creek Winery in Lexington, NE, is a great example. Owned by two generations of the McFarland family, this winery and brewery has been a Nebraska favorite since 1999. Like so many other small businesses, they were forced to shut their tasting rooms' doors when COVID hit.

But the McFarlands soon pioneered a new way to share their work with the world. They began hosting virtual tastings through Facebook Live, inviting their community to join them from home and enjoying these Nebraska-made wines.

Their first event in March of 2020 attracted just a few dozen viewers, but their livestreams soon grew to reach thousands of people across the country. HGTV featured them on their website, and they won best virtual event at the Nebraska Tourism Industry Awards last September.

When I visited Mac's Creek earlier this year, I had the chance to see firsthand how they have bounced back from the pandemic. Mac's Creek beat the odds, and they even turned last year's hardships to their advantage. But years before COVID, they overcame an even greater challenge, one that threatened to destroy their entire business.

In 2013, herbicide drift from neighboring farms wiped out nearly all of their 4,000 grapevines. This accident cost them well over \$1 million in lost production and set their growth back by at least 5 years.

They couldn't just move their vineyard somewhere else, so just as they did last year, they looked at what they needed to do and they turned to innovation to find success. With help from a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Mac's Creek was able to buy purpose-built drones to keep an eye on their 25 acres from above. These drones can help them look for early signs of herbicide drift and stop it from happening before it even starts. And they haven't suffered another incident since.

This Nebraska business took on a risky investment to protect their crops. Their drones are an example of what is known as precision agriculture technology, and Nebraska leads the United States in its adoption.

Producers from wineries to cattle ranchers can use drones and other 21st-century equipment to look after their life's work. For example, if a corn farmer wants to use less water, precision ag technology can help them calculate exactly how much to use. They can produce the same amount of corn using as much as 35 percent less water.

If a rancher wants to equip their feed bunks with sensors that track feed intake, monitor animal health, and even measure emissions from their cattle, precision ag can help them do that.

And these technologies don't just measure inputs. Autosteer and mapping technologies can also make farms more efficient, allowing producers to use less fuel to get better results. All of

these things are potential uses of precision agriculture technology, and all of them help producers become more efficient with their resources.

This equipment, it has been around since the 1990s. But like all technologies, it is constantly changing. As it grows more advanced, the market for it expands as well. And we have seen a huge rise in demand in recent years.

Precision agriculture is revolutionizing the way America's producers put food on our tables, but these technologies aren't cheap. Many farmers with small- or medium-sized operations would love to have these cutting-edge technologies, but their cost puts them just out of reach.

The adoption of precision ag equipment has been greatest on large farms, where the savings spread across many acres can generate enough to make this equipment cost effective. This equipment has the potential to transform the way producers of all sizes manage their farms, but if it only helps a small family farmer save maybe \$5 an acre next season, a \$150,000 investment starts to look a lot less attractive.

Madam President, the World Economic Forum estimates that if just a quarter of the world's farms adopted precision ag practices, farm yields globally could increase by 15 percent. They have also shown that greenhouse gas emissions and water use could decrease by at least the same amount. Adopting these technologies in Nebraska has already helped producers reduce soil erosion and carbon output while also increasing water quality in the area around their operations. And according to a recent report about the environmental benefits of precision ag, even at the current levels, this equipment already saves 30 million pounds of herbicide, 100 million gallons of fossil fuels, and 500 million gallons of water every single year. And that is just in the United States.

These technologies can help us feed a growing population while also caring for our environment. We should be encouraging more producers to turn to precision agriculture, and that is why I am joining with the senior Senator from Minnesota to introduce a bill to create a loan program that would help them do just that.

My bill would establish the Precision Agriculture Loan Program, which would offer low-cost and low-term loans to producers who want to adopt precision ag technologies but they may be unable to make these investments through traditional banks. This would be the first Federal loan program dedicated entirely to precision ag, and instead of upward of 5 percent in interest, producers could pay interest rates under 2 percent on loans 3 to 12 years in length. These loans would cover precision ag technology that improves efficiency or it reduces inputs. My bill would help the math start to make sense for our producers who would like to adopt these technologies, but they haven't been able to afford them.

It is rare to find an issue that is so clearly a win-win for everyone involved. From the University of Nebraska to the Association of Equipment Manufacturers, the Nebraska Farm Bureau, and the American Conservation Coalition, support is growing for making precision agriculture more accessible.

Another bill I introduced with Senator KLOBUCHAR in April, which would help farmers connect precision ag technologies to each other through the internet of things, has been met with a similar outpouring of support. That is because precision agriculture—those technologies—really have no drawbacks. It is better for ag producers, rural communities, consumers, and the environment, all at the same time.

The biggest obstacle is the cost, and that burden falls mostly on the smaller farms that can't afford to take the risks. Well, my bill will give smaller operations the backing that they need to manage those risks.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. GILLIBRAND). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I understand Senator WHITEHOUSE has reserved time on the floor, and I will yield to him when he does arrive, but I would like to say a few words.

I would like to talk about the state of the coronavirus epidemic in our country. But before I do I want to respond to the Senate Parliamentarian's ruling last night on immigration reform.

While I am disappointed by this decision, I am not giving up on this fight. There are too many lives at stake. Over the past 18 months, thousands of DACA recipients and other immigrants have saved American lives as doctors, intensive care nurses, paramedics, respiratory therapists. They have risked their own lives for us, for our friends and loved ones. The least we can do to honor their sacrifice is give them a path to legal status in America.

In the coming days, Senate Democrats will present an alternative proposal to the Senate Parliamentarian. But the fact is, we already know how essential immigrants are to America and our economic future.

During the pandemic, undocumented immigrants have not only been saving lives in our Nation's hospitals. They have been toiling in extreme heat on farms across the country to secure the food that we eat every day in America. They have defended our national security as members of the military. They have been working as home health aides, helping care for our parents and

family members with disabilities. And they have been caring for our children as teachers and childcare workers.

They are Americans in every way except for their official legal status. It is far past time to fix that, and that is exactly what Senate Democrats intend to do through budget reconciliation.

This is an issue which is not new to the Senate. It is certainly not new to me. It was 20 years ago that I introduced the DREAM Act—20 years.

Of course, many people have said: DURBIN, if you are such a great legislator, what are you waiting for?

And a lot of these Dreamers and DACA-protected people have said the same.

I will tell them that, on at least five separate occasions, we have brought the DREAM Act to the floor of the Senate only to be stopped by the filibuster—five times during the course of 20 years.

The one time that it was passed during comprehensive immigration reform, the Republican leadership in the House refused to consider the measure, and it was left in the current state.

I recall the previous President, Donald Trump, assuring me that he was going to take care of those kids—in his own words. Well, he certainly did. He tried to abolish DACA and to remove the protection which 780,000 of these young people have.

You see, these are young people who came to the United States as infants, toddlers, and little babies. They were brought here by their parents, and they grew up in America and did everything you were supposed to do—went to school, had the odd jobs, worked around the house, believed in the future of this country. But when they showed up in the classrooms every day, they lifted their hands and pledged allegiance to that flag. They believed it was their flag. And it wasn't until later in life that their parents leveled with them, told them that wasn't the case at all; they were undocumented—technically illegal, in the words of some.

I can't imagine having that hanging over your head, knowing that any day there might be a knock on the door, that someone in your family might be removed, or your whole family deported, for that matter. They lived under that shadow their entire lives, and they still did remarkable, courageous things.

I have come to the floor of the Senate 125 times to tell their stories individually with color photographs, to let my colleagues know that there are people behind these numbers—real people, amazing people. And over the years that I have told their stories, more and more of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle have come up afterward and said: What can we do?

Well, what we can do is we can pass legislation to give these young people a chance, to give many others a chance too.

These farm workers, for goodness sakes—half of the farm workers toiling

in America today are undocumented. We don't think twice about whether we are going to eat the fruit that they pick or the vegetables they deliver to the market. We take it for granted that it will be there. Many of these people have spent a lifetime working for dirt wages in miserable jobs that many Americans wouldn't consider.

To give them a chance to become legal in America is a reflection on who we are.

I know my critics will say: Aren't you paying any attention to the southern border?

I am. There is a lot to be done. Right now, we are dealing in Del Rio, TX, with thousands of Haitians who were lured by some of these smugglers and others to come to that port in the hope of being able to enter the United States. That is not happening in most cases. Many of them are even being returned to Haiti.

It doesn't solve the individual family problem but addresses the reality of immigration in America today. There are certain fundamentals we need in any immigration system. We won't get those fundamentals with the current laws.

What are they? Basically, we need border security. In an age of terrorism and drugs, we need to know who is coming into this country and whether they are bringing anything with them that will hurt anyone. Secondly, we should never knowingly allow a dangerous person to come in the United States or to stay in an undocumented status, period. And number three, America cannot absorb, at any given time, everyone who wants to come and live here. We have to have an orderly process, one that reflects our values, particularly for those who are seeking asylum and refugee status.

The refugee issue was brought home to us a few days ago in Afghanistan, where families in that country, who had helped American soldiers in every way that they could and risked their own lives, asked for refuge in the United States. The outpouring of support for those refugees outweighed the numbers of critics and cynics, and I am glad because I think that reflects who we really are.

In the next few hours and days, we will be preparing an alternative approach to the Parliamentarian in the hopes that it can be included in reconciliation and not be stopped again by the filibuster, which has held it in the past.

I see my colleague, Senator WHITEHOUSE, has arrived.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

U.S. SUPREME COURT

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I return to the Senate floor to again discuss the scheme to capture our Supreme Court; in this case, it will be through the lens of how recent Justices got on the Court. And I will choose Brett Kavanaugh.